



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM

May 17, 2019

TO: Agricultural Advisory Committee Members (AAC)

FROM: Jeremy V. Criss, Director
Office of Agriculture

SUBJECT: May 21, 2019 Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee

The Agricultural Advisory Committee will meet on Tuesday **May 21, 2019 at 7:00 pm.**

We will be meeting at the Up County Regional Services Center 12900 Middlebrook Road Germantown MD 20874 Room A on the third floor.

The agenda is on the next page.

The draft minutes from the April 16, 2019 AAC meeting will be available prior to our meeting.

The other attachments for our meeting will be posted on the Office of Agriculture web site. I will bring copies of the minutes, agenda, and other attachments.

<http://montgomerycountymd.gov/AgServices/agboardscommittee.html>

I hope to see you on Tuesday.

*Sign language interpreter services will be provided only upon request with notice as far in advance as possible but no less than 72 hours prior to the event. If you need other services or Aids to participate in this activity, please call 301-590-2810.



**Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting
May 21, 2019 Agenda**

1. Call the Meeting to Order and Introductions:
2. Approval of the AAC meeting minutes from April 16, 2019.
3. Update on the Farm Alcohol Production Facilities-The OAG will be executing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Permitting Services to assist with the implementation of Farm Alcohol Production. The process will work like the County Vendors Program under Chapter 47 of the County Code that goes back to 1996.
4. The MNCPPC has reassigned the Agritourism Study Advisory Committee-ASAC to the Division of Research and Special Projects. Josh Penn is still assigned to the project in addition to staff representatives from the Division of Research and Special Projects. The next meeting of the ASAC is May 29, 2019 at 5:00pm.
5. The Full County Council has approved the FY20 OAG Operating Budget support the Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee recommendations. The following folks were in attendance at the PHED Committee- Michele Cropp, Linda Lewis, Bob Cissel, Doug Lechliden, Michael Jamison, Robert Butz, and Chuck Schuster. The PHED Committee recommended the OAG reduction should be added to the Reconciliation list for restoring the reduction. If the Edward Byrd Family Foundation provides funding for the program, the PHED Committee recommended that OAG should use the restored \$34,000 for some other agricultural initiative. The 2018 funding from the Edward Byrd Family totaling \$50,000 to the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation-MAEF was used for schools outside of Montgomery County. The PHED Committee also recommended that an additional \$15,000 should be added to the Reconciliation list for the OAG to expand the MARBIDCO Cost Share Matching Grant Program. The Full Council reviewed the OAG budget yesterday May 9, 2019 and approved the PHED Committee recommendations.
6. The Sugarland Broadband Pilot construction along Partnership Road is completed and the residents service for Broadband and TV has been activated. The remaining residents are demanding to know why they have not received service. The second phase of the project coming down Sugarland Road is scheduled to begin soon. There are still some residents that will not sign the comcast easement and this negatively impacts the other residents downstream that want the Comcast Service-Barbara Weitzer and her daughter and son-law. The community leaders have decided to call out the residents that are negatively impacting their neighbors and this outcome may be problematic. **There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at some point.** <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/cable/Sugarland/sugarland-comcast.html> The County has applied to the USDA for grant funding to expand broadband into the Agricultural Reserve. Several Ag Reserve residents have expressed interest to assist in replicating the success of the Sugarland Pilot into other areas of the Agricultural Reserve.

7. Update on the River Road Improvements-Michele Cropp, President of the MCFB has requested a community meeting at Lewis Orchard Farm Market with the County Executive and 19 residents that live along the gravel portion of River Road. We are waiting for a date and time when Marc Elrich is available to attend this meeting.
8. The County DEP has been asked by the Sugarloaf Citizens Association-SCA to allow approximately 18 acres associated with the County owned Linden Farm and Barn to be used for Regenerative farmers. There is a second property totaling 35 acres owned by the County (c/o DEP) that has been leased to John Jamison that will be put out for bid to find a Regenerative farmer. These two properties represent a precedent where public lands will be available for regenerative farmers as compared to commodity farmers. Here is what is posting on SCA Facebook page.

Sugarloaf Citizens Association
@sugarloafcitzens

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Farmer's Footprint
April 18 at 7:22 PM · 🌐

What is Regenerative Agriculture?

Regenerative Agriculture is a holistic land management practice that leverages the power of photosynthesis in plants to close the carbon cycle, and build soil health, crop resilience and nutrient density.

Regenerative agriculture improves soil health, primarily through the practices that increase soil organic matter.

This not only aids in increasing soil biota diversity and health, but increases biodiversity both above and below the soil surface, while increasing both water holding capacity and sequestering carbon at greater depths, thus drawing down climate damaging levels of atmospheric CO₂, and improving soil structure to reverse civilization-threatening human-caused soil loss. Research continues to reveal the damaging effects to soil from tillage, applications of agricultural chemicals and salt based fertilizers, and carbon mining.

Regenerative Agriculture reverses this paradigm to build for the future. We love this definition from Regeneration International and this inspiring urban farmer Jordan Sprick putting these practices to work every day at zero-waste urban microfarm Alegria Farms

📷 Nicol Ragland - Photographer Director

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Here's a simple summary of regenerative agriculture from Drawdown:

<https://www.drawdown.org/solutions/food/regenerative-agriculture>

The Montgomery Countryside Alliance has been exploring this issue:

<http://www.mocoalliance.org/news/regenerative-ag-and-hemp-conference-follow-up>

9. Agricultural Reserve Promotion Opportunities: **Plenty** is a new print and digital magazine about all that awaits you to explore savor and enjoy in Montgomery County's 93,000-acre Reserve and beyond. The Office of Agriculture plans to run an advertisement in the Plenty magazine for the 2019 30th Annual Farm Tour.

<https://view.joomag.com/p-l-e-n-t-y-draft-plenty-summer-2019-joomag-2/0760697001554820889?short>

Bread and Beauty: A year in Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve-Please see the copies of the book that are passed around. Ellen Letourneau 248 638 9678

www.breadbeauty.org

10. Maryland Court Ruling on Bill 52-14 Pesticide Prohibition:

<https://www.courts.state.md.us/data/opinions/cosa/2019/1203s17.pdf>

11. ZTA 19-04 Animal Boarding and Care-Residential zones

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/zta/2019/ZTA%2019-04.pdf>

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Agricultural Advisory Committee-May 21, 2019 @ 7:00pm

Agritourism Study Advisory Committee-May 29, 2019 @ 5:00 pm

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Picnic-June 2, 2019 at 4:00-Rocklands Farm

Damascus High School Agricultural Education Outreach Farm Tour-June 4, 2019

NRCS 2018 Farm Bill Forum-June 11, 2019 @ 9:00am

UM-Extension Pesticide Procrastinators Conference-40 years of Glyphosate -June 14, 2019